U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration
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FAA Intercom

FAA Picks up $75 Million in Supplemental Funds

Congress appropriated and the President approved last month an additional $75 million to be added to the agency's Fiscal Year 2000 budget. That's $2 million less than the FAA request, but still will go a long way in helping the agency provide essential services to its customers.

Some of the supplemental appropriation will go toward hiring new aviation inspectors and medical examiners who certify pilots. The remainder of the new money will be spent on contract maintenance for air traffic control software and hardware, replenishing the spare parts

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Runway Safety Program is Off and Running

The FAA's Runway Safety Program has quickly reviewed hundreds of recommendations from its June Summit and developed 10 near-term initiatives to improve runway safety (see box on p. 5).

The recommendations focus on the wide spectrum of individuals and areas that are primarily associated with runway incursions and surface incidents. These include education, training and awareness

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DSR Completed Nationwide on Schedule, on Budget

Ken Myers (left), assistant air traffic manager at the Washington Center, briefs U.S. Rep. Wolf with assistance from Controller John Bideganeta (right).

The FAA's dedication of the final Display System Replacement hardware on July 14 cemented the cornerstone of the most visible aspect of the agency's air traffic control modernization.

Representatives from Congress, the FAA, Department of Transportation and employee unions gathered in the Virginia countryside to celebrate a program that came to exemplify close cooperation and communication among a variety of groups.

Rank-and-file controllers and technicians who helped install the system and manage the transition to the new technology rubbed elbows with Rep. Frank Wolf (R-Va.), Sen. Chuck Robb (D-Va.), Administrator Jane Garvey and DOT Secretary Rodney Slater.

The Leesburg Air Route Traffic Control Center is the 20th and final location for the $1.05 billion DSR program, which replaces decades-old equipment with modern color displays and data processing capability, and an easy-to-use "windows" navigating system. It is the first major component of the

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In This Issue:
Read about the agency's runway safety effort, climbing the tallest mountain in North America, the President's Quality Merit Award, and cool acronym programs such as LAHSO and FOQA.

News in Brief

FAA to Buy Security Equipment

The FAA plans to buy $259 million worth of explosives detection equipment and x-ray machines with software that helps improve screener performance.

Three companies — Rapiscan Security Products, PerkinElmer Instruments and Heimann Systems — received contracts worth a total of up to $120 million to provide as many as 800 x-ray machines with threat image projection software. The software projects digital images of guns, knives and bombs onto the x-ray displays to test screeners' detection abilities. When a screener hits a button to stop the suspect bag, the machine flashes "congratulations" for detecting the threat and records the screener's performance.

The agency also will spend $50 million for as many as 210 trace detection systems produced by Barringer Instruments, Ion Track Instruments and Thermedics Detection Inc.

Another $89 million has been allocated for up to 60 eXaminer explosives detection systems from L-3 Communications.

Employees Get One-Stop Shopping for Electronic Forms

Just because the Internet promises a "paperless" society doesn't mean FAA employees won't have a wheelbarrow full of forms to fill out during their careers.

To make their lives easier the agency has established a one-stop location for electronic forms on the Internet at http://feds.faa.gov. Phase one of the FAA Electronic Document System (FEDS) made its debut in mid-July. FEDS features 170 printable forms, as well as forms that can be filled out and sent on-screen. Other frequently used forms from the FAA and other government agencies will be added.

The Office of Information Services' Application Systems Division at the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center developed the system. For more information, contact Jennifer Jamison at (405) 954-5095.

LAHSO Gets Pilots' Okay

A major point of contention between airline pilots and the FAA was ironed out in mid-July when an agreement was reached on continuing Land and Hold Short Operations (LAHSO).

LAHSO is an aviation procedure that allows aircraft to land and stop on long runways before an intersection with another runway. By stopping short, air traffic controllers can have another aircraft take off or land on the intersecting runway. This increases the capacity of an airport and helps reduce delays.

Airline pilots were concerned about safety implications associated with LAHSO. But subsequent modeling of aircraft types and how they were able to execute the procedure proved to be a measure that airlines and their pilots could agree on.

FAA Represents U.S. Interests at Radio Conference

Engineers from the FAA's Office of Spectrum Policy and Management recently traveled to the World Radio Communication Conference 2000 in Turkey to represent the U.S. civil aviation community.

Delegates from 150 countries attended to decide issues that affect the development of services derived from the radio spectrum.

The office helped develop the U.S. position concerning the protection of GPS frequencies and the high-frequency radio spectrum for oceanic coverage. There is concern within the aviation industry that increasing radio communications demands by non-aeronautical businesses will interfere with radio signals necessary for air navigation.

The office participated in sometimes very contentious negotiations supporting those issues, as well as the need for GPS modernization and ensuring the availability of aeronautical mobile satellite communication in the future.

The conference concluded with aviation interests fully protected.

NBCFAE Training Session Slated for Washington

The National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees will hold its National Training Conference in Washington, Aug. 29 to Sept. 1.

The training sessions and workshops will provide educational and career-enhancing benefits to attendees.

For more information, Headquarters employees may contact Ola Melvin at x78305. All other employees may contact Eileen Taylor at (317) 246-4512.

U.S. Ambassador to Turkey Gail Schoettler (seated) led a U.S. delegation that included FAAers Ted Davies (seated, left), Robert Frazier, Michael Richmond and Don Willis (standing, from left). The two men seated at right were unidentified.

Salcido receives her scholarship award from Quality Assurance Staff Specialist Ken Gallegos, scholarship committee chair at the Houston Center.

NHCFAE Awards Scholarship

The Houston Chapter of the National Hispanic Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees awarded a $250 scholarship to Erin Salcido of Huffman, Texas. This is the first scholarship arranged by the Houston chapter. It was presented at the Houston Air Route Traffic Control Center.

Salcido, a student at Hargrave High School, graduated with a 4.13 grade-point average and is a member of the National Honor Society. She participated in a wide variety of extracurricular activities. She has been accepted into the United States Military Academy at West Point. Jaime Garcia, president of the Houston chapter, said his group hopes to award more scholarships in the future.

Special Inspections Begin

FAA inspectors are fanning out across the country to conduct special inspections of all major U.S. carriers. The two-month exercise results from oversight problems discovered at Alaska Airlines.

FAA teams will evaluate airlines' critical safety programs to make sure they are providing proper oversight. Teams include members from the agency's Certification, Surveillance and Evaluation Team, Headquarters employees, and principal maintenance inspectors from different geographic locations.

"Considering the problems we found at Alaska, we thought it would be prudent to go back and evaluate how the other major airlines are doing in these same areas," said Nick Lacey, director of the Flight Standards Service.

The FAA has accepted Alaska Airlines' action plan to improve its oversight of heavy maintenance operations, but promised to continue stringent oversight of the airline to make sure the plan is fully implemented.

Airports to Receive New Runway Safety System

Controllers at 25 U.S. airports will be better able to monitor activity on runways and taxiways with a new ground surveillance system called Airport Surface Detection Equipment-X — or ASDE-X. It will be employed at airports that don't require the more advanced ASDE-3 system used at 34 of the nation's busiest airports.

The system gives controllers detailed information about aircraft locations and movement at night and in bad weather. It will alert them to potential collisions on or near the runway.

The 25 airports that will receive ASDE-X were selected through a rigorous safety risk assessment conducted by the FAA and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The safety assessment focused on potential accidents and fatalities in determining which airports have the greatest need. Selected airports include San Jose; Chicago Midway; Indianapolis; and Houston Hobby.

The FAA plans to award the ASDE-X contract in September.

Fort Worth Goes Back in Time

This year seems to be the year of the time capsule. FAA officials gathered at the Fort Worth Air Route Traffic Control Center to open a capsule buried in the entrance to the facility 40 years ago. A wide selection of documents was pulled from the capsule and laid out on tables for visitors to examine.

Contents included letters written from surrounding cities, corporations and organizations describing current events. A letter from the Air Traffic Control Association contained this item: "A series of disastrous mid-air collisions in 1957-58 awakened Congress to the need for an accelerated improvement in the air traffic control system through the creation of an agency independent of the Department of Commerce."

George Puckett, a retired controller and union president, was invited to speak about his experiences as a controller four decades ago. Andy Mangano, a retired FAA engineer who was responsible for the construction of the center in 1960, helped retrieve the ceremonial capsule. Rep. Martin Frost (D-Texas) praised the work of Fort Worth's controllers and pledged financial assistance to help the center maintain its systems.

Fort Worth handles traffic flying over portions of five states. It recently set a new record for operations by handling 7,388 aircraft in one day.

Visitors examine documents extracted from a 40-year time capsule at the Fort Worth ARTCC.

Garvey Credits Employees for DSR Success

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Acting Deputy Administrator Monte Belger (center) presents a plaque commemorating completion of the DSR installation program to (from left) Charles Reavis, Charles Hardison, Michele Polar and Kevin Lamberth from the Leesburg Center.

FAA's modernization program.

"The FAA has successfully completed a major element of its air traffic control modernization program, on time and within its budget," Garvey said. "Now, controllers who handle long-distance flights have modern tools that can be upgraded as needed to help deal with the strong growth in air traffic. We have the best, the most modern and the safest air traffic control system in the world and it's due in large part to the hard work and dedication of all those who helped us complete this important task."

The FAA's reliance on employee involvement was a "giant leap of faith," said Bill Blackmer, a member of the Air Traffic organization and the FAA's technical liaison to the National Air Traffic Controllers Association. It appears to have paid off handsomely in good reviews of the system's capabilities and good feelings among the employees who helped refine the system.

Blackmer and Keith Lambert, an automation systems program specialist in Airway Facilities and president of the Leesburg Professional Airways Systems Specialists, both commended the administrator for getting controllers and technicians, respectively, involved in the procurement of the new system.

"Sometimes management has been a little hard of hearing," Lambert said. "Things have changed a lot in the last couple of years with the team and partnership concepts. They've put teams together to discuss issues before they start to build systems. It really helps a lot."

Both hope the success of DSR bodes well for future cooperation. Blackmer is working on a team that already is developing new bells and whistles for DSR. "We're not just involved in procurement now. We're involved in development," he said.

FAA Rule Provides Access to Airline Data

A proposed rule will give the FAA access to key flight information from every U.S. airline participating in the Flight Operational Quality Assurance (FOQA) program.

The agency wants to use this information to identify aviation safety trends and prevent accidents. It has set a goal of cutting the commercial aviation accident rate by 80 percent by 2007.

Right now, airlines voluntarily participate in the FOQA program but do not have to share the information they gather with the FAA. Airlines and pilots were worried that information provided the FAA could be used against them in enforcement actions. Under the proposed rule, the agency promises to use safety data generated in a FOQA program for enforcement action only in egregious cases.

FOQA uses state-of-the-art flight data recorders to collect and analyze data on routine flights. Airlines collect data about everyday safety trends in their operations and will be required to share it with the FAA. The agency will use the information to identify industry-wide safety trends, allowing the FAA and industry to more effectively target resources and correct potential safety problems. Insight provided by these programs could enhance operational safety, training effectiveness, maintenance, engineering, air traffic control procedures, and airport surface safety.

FOQA has already proven successful. Pilots have safer approaches at more than a dozen airports worldwide as a result of information gathered by FOQA. The program has documented unusual autopilot disconnects, Ground Proximity Warning System warnings, excessive take-off angles, unstable landing approaches, hard landings and compliance with standard operating procedures.

Eight airlines have FOQA programs, one has FAA approval pending, and five others say they plan to initiate programs in the future.

Runway Safety Program is Off and Running

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for controllers, pilots and vehicle operators, procedures for pilots and controllers, improvements to surface markings, and technology.

Administrator Jane Garvey, speaking at the summit, said, "There are no silver bullets" to resolve the runway safety, but there are multiple solutions. The 10 initiatives address actions that can be implemented within the next 30 days, completed in most cases by the end of the year, and have the greatest prospect for improving runway safety. The FAA will follow up in October with a national blueprint for runway safety. The national blueprint will address more than 800 recommendations that have been received as a result of the agency's increased emphasis on runway safety.

Runway safety has taken on national prominence. Rep Frank R. Wolf, (R-Va.) who has been instrumental in obtaining funding for the runway safety program, spoke at the summit, as did National Transportation Safety Chairman Jim Hall, and DOT Inspector General Ken Mead.

In developing the initiatives, the FAA reviewed recommendations from the NTSB, Commercial Aviation Safety Team/Joint Safety Analysis Team, regional workshops, and a human factors symposium.

Garvey responded to the growing concern last year when she identified runway safety as one of the agency's top priorities and selected John Mayrhofer to lead the effort. Since then, the agency has held runway safety conferences in every region to educate and heighten awareness among pilots and controllers and to elicit recommendations for improvement. A human factors conference in early June delved into the role that human error plays in runway incursions and also developed recommendations for improvement.

The FAA's emphasis on education, training and awareness becomes clear when considering that runway safety depends on the performance of thousands of air traffic controllers, 600,000-plus pilots and a million or more people authorized to operate vehicles at airports.

Although the agency is emphasizing education as its primary goal, it is also inviting industry to weigh in with technological solutions (see related article about ASDE-X in the News in Brief section on p.3).

Runway Safety Team Formed

Members of the Runway Safety team already are coordinating the agency's initiatives with the lines of business.

The team includes Denny Lawson, who supervises the day-to-day activities of representatives from six lines of business. Arthur Sullivan coordinates with industry on technology issues.

Larry Cole is focusing on the human factors side of runway safety, while Edward Dorsett is helping establish airport standards. Julio Garcia-Laffitte coordinates with Airway Facilities in such areas as flight checks, and serves as Runway Safety's Web master.

Steve Shaffer represents Air Traffic Services on all runway safety issues. Mike Lenz handles risk assessments associated with runway safety technology, procedures and regulations.

Scott Schoonover coordinates runway safety matters relative to flight standards and aircraft certification.

Runway Safety Program Releases Near-Term Initiatives

The Runway Safety Program's immediate focus will be on the following areas:

- Enhanced operational air traffic control training
- Foreign air carrier pilot training, education and awareness
- Advisory circular for airport surface operations
- Airport markings
- Education, training and awareness for pilots, controllers and ground vehicle operators
- Memory enhancement techniques for training controllers
- Pilot/controller communications phraseology review
- Improved pilot evaluation and testing
- Air Traffic teamwork enhancement training for tower controllers
- Technology assessment

Members of the FAA's Runway Safety program team will work across the lines of business to improve runway safety.

Logistics Center Receives President's Award

Sometimes a government organization performs so well its success can't be overlooked.

The FAA Logistics Center at the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center in Oklahoma City is one of the agency's — and the federal government's — big success stories. That was driven home last month when the center received a 2000 President's Quality Merit Award in Washington.

The award is the public-sector equivalent of the prestigious Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. It recognizes federal organizations that have improved their performance while providing high-quality products and services to customers.

Employees were instrumental in helping improve the center's customer service. They developed business scorecards for their work areas. Criteria sheets — a form of contract between the employees and their customers — were developed to tie directly to the performance of the center's work force.

The center's success is an example of how hard work and creativity can be used in tandem to improve operations. The center isn't keeping its secrets to itself, either. It has produced several publications that serve up its recipe for business success.

Just how important that success means to customers is exemplified by the enormity of the center's operations. The center operates around the clock as the largest single source of parts, services and engineering for the nation's air traffic control system. It has adopted private-sector techniques to boost its performance, risen to industry standards in just 18 months, and created a customer-care center that handles more than 18,000 calls per year from 7,000 technicians around the country.

The Logistic Center's display chronicles its success. Staffing the booth are (from left) Cathy Masala, Laura Collier and Cal Fox.

People

International Aviation Post Filled

Ross Hamory is the new director of the FAA's Office of International Aviation. He replaces Joan Bauerlein who became senior advisor for transportation at the InterAmerican Development Bank in February.

Ross Hamory

Hamory had been director of the agency's Asia-Pacific office in Singapore since 1996. He has worked at the agency for 28 years in a number of positions, including as director of the Civil Aviation Security Policy and Planning office, and deputy director of the Office of Civil Aviation Security Operations, where he helped the director oversee 800 civil aviation security employees around the world.

Hamory is a graduate of the FAA's Executive Development Program.

John Hancock was acting director until July 31 when Hamory came on board. He continues as deputy director.

Flight Safety Foundation Honors FAAer

Tom Imrich, the National Resource Specialist for Operations, has been selected by the Flight Safety Foundation as the recipient of the Admiral Luis de Florez Award.

Imrich is recognized for outstanding contributions to aviation safety through his work on a variety of programs, including those involved with low-visibility operations, crew qualification criteria and airborne collision avoidance systems.

Imrich will receive the award and a $1,000 honorarium at the foundation's annual awards dinner scheduled this fall.

Understanding the Appropriations Process (Is the Check in the Mail?)

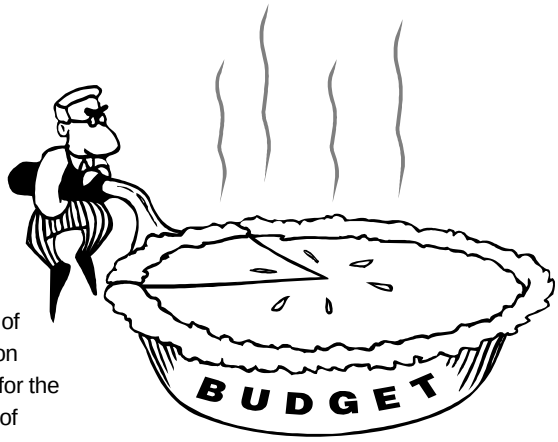
This is the second in a series of articles developed by VOICE in conjunction with the FAA Intercom *to help demystify the FAA's budget process. Last month's article dealt with the authorization of funds. This article focuses on the appropriation process, or how the FAA actually receives funds from Congress.*

The Constitution requires that all funds paid out of the U.S. Treasury go through the appropriations process. These funds come from Congress to support government agencies and programs.

There are 13 appropriation acts grouped along agency lines to coincide with the 13 subcommittees of the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations. The appropriations for the FAA are included in the Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriation Act. The FAA receives funding through four major appropriations: 1) Operations, 2) Facilities & Equipment, 3) Research, Engineering & Development, and 4) Grants-in-Aid to Airports.

Appropriations stipulate how funds may be spent and usually set a time limit on how long the funding is available. For example, the Facilities & Equipment appropriation outlines the activities and programs for which the funding may be used. It states: "*For necessary expenses, not otherwise provided for, for acquisition, establishment, and improvement . . . of air navigation and experimental facilities and equipment . . .*" The act also includes a dollar amount followed by the period of time the agency has to spend the money. Again from the F&E appropriation: "*$2,656,765,000 of which $2,334,112,400 shall remain available until September 30, 2003 . . .*"

Appropriations begin their life as a request from the President. His request is due by the first Monday in February for the fiscal year beginning in October of the same year. The President's budget recommends amounts to be appropriated for all agencies of the government. It is followed by detailed justifications of each program within an agency.



The House and Senate subcommittees then hold hearings so their members may ask questions about the funding proposals. The House often moves before the Senate, but not always. Witnesses at the hearings usually include experts from the General Accounting Office who have reviewed the request, as well as officials from the Department of Transportation. The administrator is the FAA's chief witness and, with the help of assistant and associate administrators, fields questions from members of Congress.

Due to time constraints (the hearings only last one or two days), answers to many questions are provided in writing after the hearings. The FAA received about 550 questions about the Fiscal 2001 budget. Some questions require a great deal of research to answer. Given the sheer volume of questions and the short deadline to reply — usually a matter of days — it is a daunting task.

Based on their review of the justifications and responses to questions, the House and Senate subcommittees prepare both the bill (appropriations act) and a report. The report on the bill explains how it dealt with each program in the president's request. The report might also direct the FAA to do specific things such as write a report on a certain program.

The Senate's report usually recommends changes to the bill offered by the House. As with all other laws, identical versions of the appropriations bill must be agreed to by both the House of Representatives and the Senate. The two different versions of the bill are reconciled in a conference committee.

Once passed by both chambers the reconciled bill is forwarded to the President who may either approve the bill by signing it into law, or veto it and return it to Congress.

Two other actions may occur during the appropriations process: a budget amendment and a supplemental appropriation.

Agencies begin work on a budget proposal 18 months to two years before the beginning of the fiscal year. Naturally, a lot of things might happen during that time that could alter budget priorities. A change to the President's budget request before the enactment of an appropriation is called a budget amendment. The budget request is being changed to reflect new priorities.

A request for additional funding once the appropriation has been passed is called a supplemental appropriation. This device, among other things, is used to provide funding for, emergencies like natural disasters. The FAA was successful in getting additional funding for the current fiscal year (see related article on the front page).

Next month's article deals with how the FAA develops its budget proposal for presentation to Congress.

Taking Cool to New Heights

Some people take the concept of fun to new levels. Take Steve Creamer. The air traffic manager at the Anchorage Air Route Traffic Control Center faced near-zero temperatures, deep crevasses and the threat of altitude sickness to pursue his idea of fun: climbing Denali, the tallest mountain in North America.

Creamer and his niece, Lauren, reached the summit of Denali on June 25, 16 days after beginning the climb. Although he had scaled the mountain on a guided expedition in 1985, this was the first time in three unguided attempts that he completed the climb. He tried to scale the heights in

Lauren Creamer descends the West Buttress.

1986, but broke a couple of teeth in a 90-foot slide down a snow slope, and aborted the climb. In 1987, bad weather forced him to turn back. After that, he stowed his gear and concentrated on his work at the FAA.

What compelled Creamer to pick up his ice axe and strap on his snow boots after a 13-year hiatus from climbing? The death of his father two years ago might have been a last gift to his son. Creamer began to think about the priorities in his life. "I did a little reflection on what's important in life. Very few people die wishing they'd been to work more. Climbing Denali grew out of that," he said. He'd also grown close to Lauren, who shared his interest in the outdoors and climbing.

The start of the trek up Denali's West Buttress on June 10 was not auspicious. Bad weather prevented several hundred climbers from attempting the summit. Winds were blowing 50-70 mph, the temperature had fallen at times to 40 below zero, and it was snowing 6-12 inches at a shot. It was one of the coldest Junes in memory.

The Creamers dealt with the weather by focusing on their three goals: being safe, having fun and making the summit. Creamer also credits the support of his wife, Merry, and his friends and family.

Merry, an FAA employee in the Airway Facilities Division, is not thrilled with her husband's mountain climbing. "I don't hesitate to tell folks that the insanity is on his side of the family," she said. "All kidding aside, it's important to follow our dreams. You must make extraordinary choices to have an extraordinary life, and life with Steve has always been extraordinary."

"I just had so much support from friends and family," her husband said. "It was the key to us feeling successful. Somehow, all that positive thought must have influenced the weather."

The week they reached 14,000 feet, the weather broke. The last four days of the climb took place in beautiful conditions, Creamer said. That's not to say the hardest part of their climb was over.

Climbing Denali involves walking across flat, snow-covered glaciers and scaling ice walls angled as sharply as 60 degrees. Crevasses that plunge hundreds of feet are a danger. Even slopes set at 30-35 degrees are dangerous if one should fall. Creamer remembers dropping a bag and watching it slide down the slope, over the horizon into oblivion.

Complicating matters besides the 50-pound backpacks the climbers carried was the thinning air. The ascent must progress slowly to allow the body to acclimate to air that has only 45 percent of the oxygen found at sea level. A rapid altitude change could cause swelling in the lungs and brain that might prove fatal.

The final attempt at the summit came from 17,000 feet. The Creamers left at 11 a.m. to travel the final 2 ½ miles to the top. It took them nine hours to reach the 20,320-foot summit, where the wind-chill temperature had fallen well below zero.

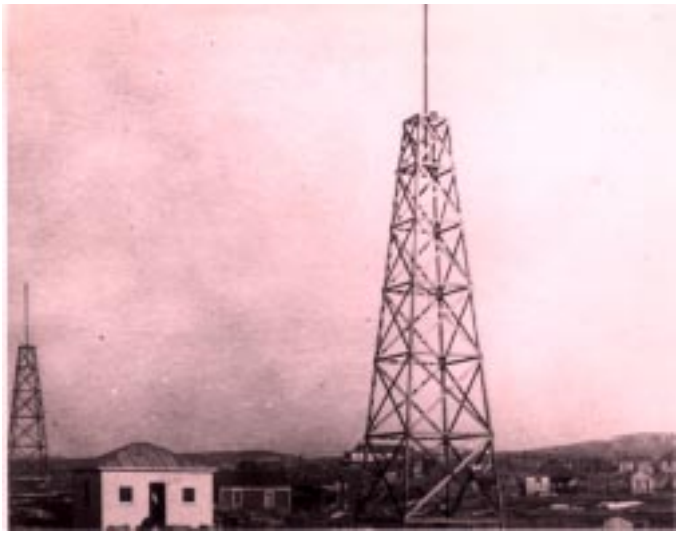
Clouds ringed the mountain a few thousand feet below. Thunderheads were building in the distance. "We could see all the mountains in the Alaska range for about 200 miles in any direction," he recalled.

More intense than the cold was the satisfaction he felt. "I left the summit thinking 'I don't have to do this again.'"

And he won't. He promised Merry this would be his last climb on Denali. But he won't hang up his parka permanently. "There's hundreds of mountains in Alaska," he observed. Still, Creamer knows better than to cross nature. "You don't conquer Denali," he said. "You kind of sneak up on it and hope the weather is good."

Steve Creamer catches his breath on Denali's summit.

Flight Service Stations Celebrate 80th Anniversary



The Air Mail Radio Station at Rock Springs, Wyo., one of the original transcontinental route facilities, is shown here, circa 1921.

A notable anniversary in the history of the nation's airspace system occurs Aug. 20.

On that date in 1920, the U.S. Post Office Department issued a directive for the establishment of a series of Air Mail Radio Stations along a coast-to-coast airway. They are the ancestors of today's flight service stations.

The radio stations were part of a cutting-edge program led by Otto Praeger, an assistant postmaster general who became a key figure in the early history of U.S. aviation. The hard-driving Praeger inaugurated the first regular air mail service in 1918, then set his sights on a transcontinental route that would dramatize the airplane's potential for practical transportation. Even though accidents were frequent, especially in the program's earlier years, the Air Mail Service succeeded in pioneering basic techniques of modern commercial aviation.

Among the best friends of the mail pilots were radio operators who relayed crucial weather data and other information along the airway. Recruited for their skill in the exacting field of wireless communication, these individuals worked under challenging conditions. The typical station was a shack. Unpaid overtime was routine, and annual leave an uncertain hope. In the beginning, each facility was staffed seven days a week by a single operator whose "split shift" was timed to fit scheduled flights. By 1927, however, additional staffing permitted 24-hour service east of Salt Lake City and 16-hour service farther west.

In 1927, private air carriers took over the transcontinental mail operations. The 17 radio stations were transferred from the Post Office to the Department of Commerce, whose aeronautics branch was the predecessor of today's FAA. The facilities were called Airway Radio Stations, the first of many designations as functions evolved over the years.

Changes under the Department of Commerce included a drive to establish direct radio contact between the station operators and pilots, a technique that the Post Office had used only on an experimental basis. For ground communications, meanwhile, the department turned to telegraph land lines to increase reliability. By 1933, the number of stations grew to 68. World War II brought a further increase in the number of stations under the Civil Aeronautics Administration. Following a postwar spurt, their numbers peaked to more than 450.

Under the FAA, the facilities became Flight Service Stations in 1960. As part of its general modernization program, the FAA developed computerized systems to upgrade the stations' efficiency and assist consolidation. In 1982, the first building designed to house an Automated Flight Service Station opened in Denver. Four years later, the agency commissioned the first "family" of AFSS facilities using the initial version of the Model 1 automation system. AFSS facilities now represent 61 of the FAA's 75 Flight Service Stations.

Today's flight service specialists are no longer required to adopt the rugged lifestyle of the original Air Mail Radio Station operators — but their "can-do" attitude reflects a tradition set by their predecessors 80 years ago. The specialists are on the front line of aviation safety, linking pilots to the airspace system, assisting flights that become lost or encounter emergencies, and providing indispensable information.

This operator's bell bottom trousers indicates his background in ocean-going radio, a common hiring source for the early aeronautical communications stations.

Looking Back on the Most Memorable Aviation Records of 1999

The National Aeronautic Association announced its list of the most memorable aviation records of 1999, selected from more than 150 aviation world records set in the United States.

"Of all the aviation records set during the past year, we feel these records best exemplified the aviator's desire for excellence and achievement," said Art Greenfield, NAA's director of contest and records.

The most memorable records of 1999 are:

Airshow pilot Wayne Handley set the record for **Time to Climb to 3,000 Meters** in his homebuilt, 750-horsepower Turbo Raven, with a time of 1 minute, 9 seconds. The average vertical speed during the flight was 8,559 feet per minute, or 97 mph. The flight took place in Salinas, Calif., on Jan. 20, beating the previous record by 39 seconds.

This Turbo Raven climbed to 3,000 meters in less than 70 seconds.

A team of 118 women skydivers, known as Jump for the Cause, created the **Largest Freefall Formation** in the sky over Perris, Calif., on Sept. 5. They were able to hold the formation for 3.46 seconds before breaking away. The previous record was a 100-woman formation set in 1992.

FedEx pilots averaged a record 626 mph on the way to setting a record for speed over a commercial air route.

On Nov. 28, FedEx MD-11F pilots George Murphy and Darrell Holmstrom flew from Tokyo, Japan, to Anchorage, Alaska, in five hours, 28 minutes, averaging 626 mph, and setting a record for **Speed Over a Commercial Air Route.** The previous record of 582 mph was set in 1993 in a Boeing 747-100.

Flying along the Sierra Nevada mountains in a Schleicher ASH-25 motorglider (with the engine removed), James and Thomas Payne averaged 167 mph over the 210-mile course. This record for **Speed Over an Out and Return Course** of 300 Kilometers originated in California City, Calif., on March 3. The previous record of 101 mph was set in 1997.

With 22,500 pounds of concrete slabs onboard to simulate a typical operational payload, Lyle Schaefer, Arlen Rens, and Timothy Gomez piloted a Lockheed Martin C-130J to 40,386 feet, setting the record for **Altitude with 10,000-Kilogram Payload**. The record was accomplished in the Short Takeoff and Landing category, requiring the takeoff and landing rolls to be made in less than 1,640 feet. The record was set May 14 in Marietta, Ga.

Flying a small, 8,000 cubic foot, homebuilt Rozier balloon, Troy Bradley remained aloft for 27 hours, 25 minutes, breaking the record for **Duration**. He started his trip on Oct.20, in Ozark, Mo., and came back to earth on Oct. 22, in Spring Hill, Tenn. The previous record, also held by Bradley, was 10 hours, one minute, set in 1994.

This Rozier balloon stayed aloft for more than 27 hours to set a record for duration.

Want a Chance to Speak up?

All FAA employees will have the chance to provide input on a variety of issues when they receive the 2000 Employee Attitude Survey in September.

This will be the second consecutive time the EAS is distributed to all employees. Feedback will be solicited about a number of issues, including new pay systems, Model Work Environment, communication within the agency and mutual trust.

The survey is important not just to the agency at large, but to lines of business and staff offices who can use the data to gauge insights from their own employees and tailor responses to their concerns. It is anonymous, although employees will be asked to identify the region, line of business — and in some cases — the facility/division in which they work.

Administrator Jane Garvey, in a cover letter to the survey, urges employees to fill out and return the survey. "Employee attitude surveys are only as good as the number of employees who are willing to provide honest feedback and management's willingness to respond in kind," she says. "We took the 1997 results seriously and have used them to make several important changes, particularly in the areas of internal communications, performance management, model work environment and people management."

A little more than half of FAA employees responded to the 1997 EAS, and the results gathered from that effort have been applied in a number of areas. For instance, the executive listening sessions and formation of the VOICE communications team resulted from the 1997 EAS.

Supervisors held discussions with employees about a shared understanding of what constitutes a Model Work Environment. Also, organizations applied their own results and dealt with such issues as improving managers' coaching skills.

To develop the survey, the Human Resource Management and Civil Aeromedical Institute team solicited input from lines of business, staff offices and other stakeholders, and asked the unions to review a draft.

The plan is to brief the management board on EAS results next January or February. Employees will be able to view the results after that and contribute to a dialog about continuous agency improvement. It will be at least two years before employees will get another chance to provide input through the EAS.

For more information, contact Paul Twohig at (202) 267-3860.

CMD Has Moved!

Virtually moved that is. As part of a larger project to move into cyberspace, the Center for Management Development changed its Web address to cmd.faa.gov.

In the near future CMD plans to offer online distance learning materials and courses. Print-on-demand correspondence courses will be one of the many offerings available on the Internet and Intranet sites.

Included in the center's Internet planning is a new Learning Resource System. The system will be a "knowledge hub" that helps managers, supervisors and employees move their organizations into a performance-based environment. This project is expected to come on line in September.

Supplemental Nets FAA $75 Million

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inventory, and communications lines between FAA facilities.

The FAA's case for a supplemental appropriation was strong. Without the funding, the agency predicted a 5 percent drop in safety inspections, a reduction in substance abuse oversight and a growing backlog in medical certification. FAA officials maintained this would not affect the safety of the nation's air traffic system, but it would affect its efficiency.

Still, those ramifications might have been lost on Congress if it weren't for the personal efforts of Administrator Jane Garvey, said Brian Riley, the FAA's budget director. "This time around, the FAA was really able to quantify why it needed the money and what it would be used for." Riley said it's hard for the FAA to quantify its work. Passengers don't have the opportunity to see inspectors or controllers doing their jobs, Riley said.

Situations such as the loss of the ASR-9 radar in Boston helped to explain the need for more spare parts. The message about spares was clear, Riley said, when the FAA announced that any future replacement of ASR-9 radar would be taken from an operating airport.

The agency's job now is to quantify its FY 2001 request. The Senate has cut about $250 million from the FAA's $6.6 billion operations request, while the House cut approximately $50 million. A conference committee on the FAA budget request is expected to begin in September.

FAA Considers how to Attract Best and Brightest

With nearly a quarter of its air traffic control technicians eligible for retirement in two years, and half of its executives reaching retirement age in three years, the FAA is facing a real crunch in the personnel department.

Administrator Jane Garvey addressed this issue and how the FAA plans to respond during a speech at the Excellence in Government 2000 conference in Washington last month.

With private industry offering more attractive salaries, how can a federal agency like the FAA hope to compete? Garvey sees three key elements to government work that attracts the best and the brightest: doing work that matters, is focused on results and that can be done in a creative environment.

"There are few jobs as critical as assuring the safety and security of our nation's aviation system," Garvey said. Safely handling 200,000 operations everyday and ensuring the safety of 650 million passengers every year gives employees the opportunity to shape the agenda and have a direct impact on the lives of others, she said.

Results-oriented work needs to replace process as the agency's priority, she added. Eliminating needless layers of management, convoluted career paths and bureaucratic frustrations remains the agency's biggest challenge to replacing process with results as the ultimate measure of FAA success.

The agency's Y2K triumph is a case in point, Garvey pointed out. Faced with short timelines, a long list of milestones and a deadline set in concrete, the FAA outperformed the predictions of outsiders, giving the agency "a wonderful sense of accomplishment."

She cited organizations within the agency that have developed scorecards to help them keep focused on results.

Keeping employees motivated and tapping into their creativity is another hurdle facing the FAA, Garvey concluded.

One example of creative thinking is the Center for Management Development's decision to take training to the employees, providing 24-hour classes to controllers by reaching out to the regions.

Trainers will now be available on location at hours convenient to controllers. This reduces the need to move controllers off position and down to Florida to attend classes.

Accessing Voice Mail Toll Free

FAA employees at Headquarters and local satellite offices should use the following toll-free numbers when accessing their voice mail while traveling out of the area:

Headquarters	1-800-842-8736
Nassif Bldg.	1-800-986-9678
Portals	1-800-358-8319
Dulles Airport	1-800-722-1140
Hangar 6	1-800-322-8316

In order to minimize government costs, employees are further reminded to use the above toll-free numbers instead of their federal calling cards when calling voice mail within the continental U.S.

For information, contact Edye Stewart-Schilling at 267-7944.

FAA Intercom Wants to Hear from You

Do you have a suggestion, comment or gripe about the *FAA Intercom*? The publication's staff wants to hear from you. Contact Editor Jim Tise via cc:Mail, e-mail at jim.tise@faa.gov, or fax at (202) 267-5965.

The *FAA Intercom* is for agency employees. It is interested in all suggestions about how to improve the publication.

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